

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 VO-03

SCA-01 EUR-12 /069 R

DRAFTED BY AF/W-GADIES :DFF

APPROVED BY AF/W-TWMSMITH

AF/P-JPOPE (DRAFT)

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P 021625Z MAR 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY COTONOU PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:PFOR, DM, US

SUBJECT:AMBASSADOR BOYA'S VIEWS ON WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE
ON BENIN

REF: (A) STATE 49275; (B) STATE 49305

1. DURING MEETING WITH AF/W DIRECTOR FEB 27 REPORTED REF
(B), AMBASSADOR BOYA SAID THAT HE HAD MATTER HE WISHED
TO BRING TO ATTENTION OF DEPT. BOYA CLAIMED THAT ON
FEBRUARY 13 JOURNALIST KAREN DEYOUNG APPLIED FOR VISA AT
BENINESE EMBASSY AND TOLD BOYA THAT SHE HAD BEEN RECOM-
MENDED FOR VISA BY DEPT. BOYA THEN SAID THAT ARTICLE WHICH
HAD APPEARED IN FEB. 27 ISSUE OF POST WAS GROSSLY IN-
ACCURATE IN ITS DESCRIPTION OF BENIN, AND HE ASKED WHY
DEPT SPONSORED SUCH JOURNALISTS IN THEIR VISA APPLICATIONS.
IN ADDITION, HE WONDERED ALOUD WHY DEYOUNG HAD STAYED IN
COTONOU TO DO SUCH AN ARTICLE WHEN HER STATED INTENT IN
APPLYING FOR VISA WAS TO TRAVEL TO NIGERIA.

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2. WE RESPONDED BY POINTING OUT TO AMBASSADOR THAT DEPT HAD NOT IN ANY FASHION RECOMMENDED DEYOUNG FOR VISA. HOWEVER, SOME CONFUSION MIGHT HAVE EXISTED SINCE ON FEB 13. DEPT DID INDEED REQUEST EXPEDITIOUS TREATMENT OF VISA APPLICATION FROM TDY CONSULAR SECRETARY WOODAMS EN ROUTE TO COTONOU. DEPT REGRETTE THAT MISUNDERSTANDING

HADARISEN. BOYA WAS SATISFIED WITH EXPLANATION.

3. BOYA THEN NOTED THERE WERE MANY INACCURACIES IN ARTICLE. TWO WHICH HE POINTED OUT WERE ALLEGATION THAT BENIN STILL RECEIVES BUDGETARY SUPPORT FROM FRANCE (HE SAID FRANCE TERMINATED SUCH SUPPORT BECAUSE OF BENIN'S POLITICAL VIEWS), AND CHARGE THAT BENIN WAS QUOTE SWORN ENEMY UNQUOTE OF WESTERN NATIONS. BOYA SAID IF BENIN WERE SWORN ENEMY OF US, HE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SENT AS AMBASSADOR. BOYA REGRETTE THAT SUCH UNTRUTHS WERE PRINTED IN NEWSPAPER WITH AS WIDE CIRCULATION AS WASHINGTON POST. HE SAID THAT HE HAD TRANSMITTED ARTICLE TO GPRB WITHOUT COMMENT.

4. COMMENT: IT IS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE THAT DEYOUNG DID INDEED CLAIM THAT SHE HAD SPONSORSHIP OF DEPT IN APPLYING FOR HER VISA. IN LIGHT OF BENINESE CHAGRIN WITH HER ARTICLE, SUCH CLAIM MIGHT HAVE PLACED US IN POOR LIGHT HAD WE NOT BEEN ABLE TO EXPLAIN TO BOYA THAT WE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH HER VISA APPLICATION. DEPT PLANS TO FOLLOW UP WITH DEYOUNG UPON HER RETURN TO WASHINGTON. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TRAVEL DOCUMENTS, JOURNALISTS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE050453
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: GADIES :DFF
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760079-0640
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t197603103/aaaadmsa.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 49275, 76 STATE 49305
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 JUN 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <23 JUN 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MBASSADOR BOYA'S VIEWS ON WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE ON BENIN
TAGS: PFOR, DM, US, (DEYOUNG, KAREN)
To: COTONOU
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006